the Central Government will be glad to extend all assistance to them. It is not possible to lay down any time limit for resolving these matters.

Stateless people of Nepalese origin residing in Sikkim

1147. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are over thirty thousand stateless people of Nepalese origin in Sikkim; and

(b if so, what measures are being taken to grant them Indian citizenship?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): (a) and (b) An order was issued on 16th May, 1975 under Section 7 of the Citizenship Act, 1955 providing that every person who immediately before 26th April, 1975 (date when Sikkim became the 22nd State of the Indian Union) was a Sikkim Subject under the Sikkim Subjects Regulation, 1961, would be deemed to have become a Citizen of India. Those who were not registered under the aforesaid Regulation of 1961, or were not eligible to be so registered are among the persons who may be regarded as stateless, unless they have a claim to any other nationality.

The claims of such persons for citizenship are to be considered with due caution keeping in view the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

Implementation of recommendations of ...Pande Committee . ..

1148. SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state by when the freight equalisation policy is likely to be implemented as recommended by the Pande Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI N. K. P. SALVE): The modalities and time phasing of the withdrawal of freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron and steel are being worked out in consultation with the Ministries/Departments concerned. It is not possible at this stage to give a time schedule for its phasing out.

Prime Minister's visit to various foreign . countries ..

1149. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prime Minister visited a number of countries during the period from 1st January, 1984 to 30th June, 1984;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome of those visits;

(c) the details of the talks held with dignitaries there, protocols signed and agreements arrived at;

(d) whether it is also a fact that a number of foreign dignitaries have met and held talks with the Prime Minister during the period from 1st January, 1984 to 30th June, 1984 when they visited this country; and

(e) if so, the details of the talks agreement arrived at and protocols signed in India and the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI A. A. RAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Prime Minister visited the Soviet Union from February 13—15, 1984 to attend the funeral of the late President Yuri Andropov. The opportunity was utilised to exchange views with the new Soviet leader Mr. K. Chernenko on international affairs and matters of bilateral interest.

The Prime Minister visited Libya (April 7-8, 1984) and Tunisia (April 8-9, 1984) in response to long standing invitations. The discussions with the leaders of these two countries focussed on international situation, particularly situation in West Asia, the Iran—Iraq war, and all the various aspects of bilateral relations. While in Tunisia, the Prime Minister also met Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the P.L.O. and Mr. Chedli Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League.

(d) Yes, Sir.